

**WHAT IS CLAIMED:**

1. Apparatus for providing purge gas protection to equipment requiring operator touch access, the apparatus comprising:

- a) a frame engaging the equipment to be protected;
- b) a source of purging gas connected to the frame; and
- c) a flexible window mounted on the frame, the window having sufficient flexibility as to allow an operator to press the window against the protected equipment as to activate the equipment.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an outlet in the frame, the purging gas passing through the outlet to the ambient environment.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a detector signaling loss of purging gas pressure within the frame.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the detector measures loss of gas pressure within the frame.

5. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the detector senses an interruption in the surface of the window.

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the frame is electrically conductive whereby the frame acts as a spark arrestor.

7. Apparatus for providing purge gas protection to equipment requiring operator touch access, the apparatus comprising:

- a) a frame engaging the equipment to be protected;
- b) a source of purging gas connected to the frame and an outlet in the frame, the purging gas passing through the outlet to the ambient environment;
- c) a flexible window mounted on the frame, the window having sufficient flexibility as to allow an operator to press the window against the protected equipment as to activate the equipment; and
- d) a detector signaling loss of purging gas pressure within the frame.

8. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the detector measures loss of gas pressure within the frame.

9. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the detector senses an interruption in the surface of the window.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the frame is electrically conductive whereby the frame acts as a spark arrestor.

11. Apparatus for providing purge gas protection to equipment requiring operator touch access, the apparatus comprising:

- a) a frame engaging the equipment to be protected;
- b) a source of purging gas connected to the frame and an outlet in the frame, the purging gas passing through the outlet to the ambient environment;
- c) a flexible window mounted on the frame, the window having sufficient flexibility as to allow an operator to press the window against the protected equipment as to activate the equipment;
- d) a detector signaling loss of purging gas pressure within the frame; and
- e) wherein the frame is electrically conductive whereby the frame acts as a spark arrestor.

12. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the detector measures loss of gas pressure within the frame.

13. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the detector senses an interruption in the surface of the window.